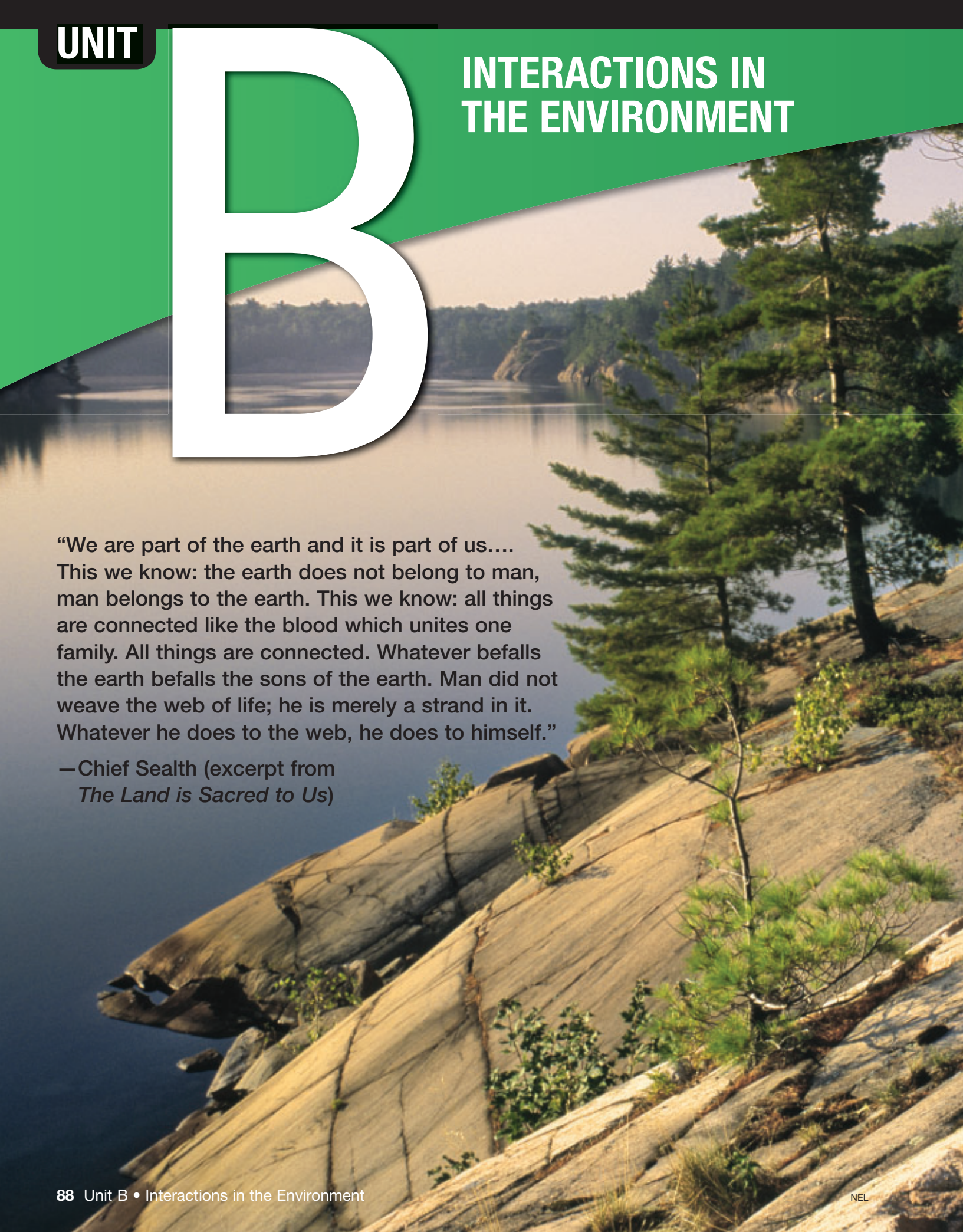


B

INTERACTIONS IN
THE ENVIRONMENT

“We are part of the earth and it is part of us....
This we know: the earth does not belong to man,
man belongs to the earth. This we know: all things
are connected like the blood which unites one
family. All things are connected. Whatever befalls
the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not
weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.”

—Chief Sealth (excerpt from
The Land is Sacred to Us)



Unit Preview

Better known today as Chief Seattle, Chief Sealth was the leader of the Suquamish and Duwamish, two First Nations that lived on the West Coast, near what is now the state of Washington, U.S.A. It is believed that he gave the speech on the previous page in 1854 as a warning to people that Earth cannot be exploited forever. His message continues to have profound meaning today.

Every day we receive warnings about the state of our planet. Greenhouse-gas emissions, climate change, energy and water shortages, and severe weather events dominate the news. However, if we act responsibly today, we can save the planet from a bleak future. As First Nations peoples have traditionally taught, “we are a part of Earth and it is part of us.”

In this unit, you will learn how living things depend on each other and how they interact with their environment. You will learn how Earth supports life. Most importantly, you will discover how humans fit into the natural world and the important role you play in keeping our planet healthy.

BIG Ideas

- Ecosystems are made up of biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) elements, which depend on each other to survive.
- Ecosystems are in a constant state of change. The changes may be caused by nature or by human intervention.
- Human activities have the potential to alter the environment. Humans must be aware of these impacts and try to control them.

CHAPTER 4 Healthy Ecosystems

CHAPTER 5 Interactions within Ecosystems

CHAPTER 6 Organisms Depend on a Healthy Environment